

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ILO, ELAB, PORG

SUBJECT: US RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ILO

REF: STATE 038223

1. REFTTEL PROVIDED POSTS WITH TALKING POINTS FOR BRIEFING
HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS ON CURRENT US RELATIONSHIP WITH THE
ILO AND REQUESTED THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT REACTIONS BE REPORTED.
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DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES RESPONSES RECEIVED. PURPOSE OF THIS
MESSAGE IS TO INFORM POSTS OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
MEETINGS OF ILO WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE (FEB. 6-17) AND
GOVERNING BODY (FEB. 20-MARCH 3) AS REVIEWED BY THE CABINET-
LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE ILO MARCH 6. YOU MAY DRAW ON THIS
MESSAGE IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

2. STRUCTURAL REFORM: THE ILO WP ON STRUCTURE DID NOT ACCEPT THE IMEC PROPOSAL FOR REAPPORTIONMENT OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNING BODY, BUT THE CONCESSIONS OFFERED OBVIOUSLY NARROWED THE REMAINING GAP BETWEEN VIEWS OF IMEC AND THOSE OF THE G-77. SPECIFICALLY, IT WAS TENTATIVELY AGREED THAT THE TEN NON-ELECTIVE SEATS SHOULD BE ABOLISHED AND THAT THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN TITULAR AND DEPUTY SEATS SHOULD BE ELIMINATED, THUS EXPANDING THE SIZE OF THE GOVERNMENT GROUP TO ABOUT 50 VOTING MEMBERS. IT

ALSO APPEARED TO BE AGREED THAT THE NUMBER OF REGIONAL ELECTORAL COLLEGES WOULD BE LIMITED TO FOUR. THE WP IS STILL DIVIDED ON THE REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS AND THE QUESTION OF PREFERENCE FOR THE LARGER COUNTRIES.

3. AS REFTEL INDICATED, US HAS NEGATIVE VIEW OF STRUCTURAL REFORM IN THE ILO, BUT REALIZES IMEC DECISION IS TO OFFER CONCESSIONS TO G-77 IN ORDER TO EXTRACT MAXIMUM QUID PRO QUO IN TERMS OF TIGHTENING RESOLUTIONS PROCEDURE (ARTICLE 17 OF THE CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS), QUORUM REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER ISSUES. AFL-CIO AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CONTINUE TO TAKE A GRAVE VIEW OF ANY INCREASE IN SIZE OF THE GB. IN FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS (WP SCHEDULED TO MEET AGAIN APRIL 24) USG BELIEVES IT ESSENTIAL THAT IMEC STAND FIRM IN LIMITING REGIONAL ELECTORAL COLLEGES TO FOUR (I.E., NO SEPARATE REGION FOR EASTERN EUROPE) AND IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROTECTING THE INTEGRITY OF THE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS GROUPS. WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE USSR APPEARED TO BE ISOLATED ON BOTH THESE ISSUES AT THE RECENT WP SESSION. NEVERTHELESS, PRESSURE FOR CONCESSIONS IN BOTH THESE VITAL AREAS WILL BE STRONG AND WE HOPE IMEC AND MAJORITY OF G-77 WILL RESIST THEM RESOLUTELY. WE ARE STUDYING REVISED IMEC PROPOSAL FOR AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE 17 AND MAY WISH TO COMMENT BEFORE WP RECONVENES.

4. GOVERNING BODY SESSION: IMEC COUNTRIES ARE LEADING A MAJOR EFFORT TO KEEP THE ILO TOGETHER AND TO FIND THE FINANCIAL MEANS TO COPE WITH THE CRISIS RESULTING FROM US WITHDRAWAL. BY THE END OF THE GB SESSION MORE THAN 4 MILLION DOLLARS IN VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS HAD BEEN PROMISED AND SUCCESS IN REACHING THE 5.7 MILLION DOLLAR TARGET SEEMED ASSURED. WE ARE PLEASED BY THIS APPARENT SUCCESS AND BY THE REELECTION, VIRTUALLY UNOPPOSED, OF FRANCIS BLANCHARD FOR A SECOND FIVE-YEAR TERM AS DIRECTOR GENERAL. LIKE MOST OTHER UN MEMBERS, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE ILO TO ADOPT THE NEW COMMON SALARY SCALE FOR GENEVA-BASED GENERAL SERVICE EMPLOYEES RECOMMENDED BY THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. WE HOPE THIS WILL BE CORRECTED

AT THE NEXT GB SESSION.

5. WE NOTED WITH INTEREST THAT THE GB DECIDED NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION TOWARDS FILLING THE GB SEAT FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY THE US AS ONE OF THE TEN CHIEF INDUSTRIAL STATES. SOME GB MEMBERS CITED THEIR HOPE THAT THE US WOULD RETURN AS A REASON FOR DELAYING ACTION. WE APPRECIATE THE INTEREST EXPRESSED IN OUR RETURN TO THE ORGANIZATION, BUT WOULD NOT EXPECT THE NORMAL PROCESS OF FILLING THE FORMER US SEAT TO BE DELAYED ON OUR ACCOUNT.

6. OTHER ISSUES: THERE ARE GOOD PROSPECTS THAT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CACR) WILL APPROVE A REPORT WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WILL AFFIRM THE BASIC PRINCIPLES CONTAINED IN THE 1977 REPORT WHICH WAS NOT ADOPTED BY THE 1977 CONFERENCE (SEE REFTEL, PARAS 6 AND 7). THESE PRINCIPLES WERE AFFIRMED IN THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE OF THE RECENT GB SESSION. THE INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS NOW MEETING IN GENEVA WILL PROBABLY PROVIDE MUCH OF THE BASIS FOR THE CACR REPORT. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THIS PROCESS CLOSELY.

7. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DG BLANCHARD INTENDS TO SEND A MISSION TO ISRAEL TO INVESTIGATE CONDITIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES IN ORDER TO REPORT TO THE CONFERENCE NEXT JUNE. IN OUR VIEW, THE MISSION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN UNDER ILO CONVENTION NO. 111 (AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT). THAT, APPARENTLY, IS BLANCHARD'S INTENTION. IT IS CRITICAL THAT BOTH ISRAEL AND ARAB STATES SUPPORT THE DG'S EFFORTS TO AVOID VIOLATION OF DUE PROCESS, WHILE GIVING DUE WEIGHT TO THE CONCERNS OF MEMBER STATES ABOUT LABOR CONDITIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

8. CLC MEETING: THE CABINET-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE ILO MET MARCH 6 TO REVIEW DEVELOPMENTS AND US POLICY TOWARDS THE ILO. THE COMMITTEE MADE NO CHANGE IN THE CURRENT POLICY OF CLOSELY MONITORING ILO DEVELOPMENTS. IN ORDER TO BETTER ASSESS DEVELOPMENTS AT THE 1978 CONFERENCE, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE US MISSION IN GENEVA SHOULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY A FEW INDIVIDUALS FROM WASHINGTON IN OBSERVING CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS. VANCE

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